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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)
David F. Rivers et al.) Examiner: O. F. Sanchez
for RAZOR BLADE CARTRIDGE HAVING) Group Art Unit: 3724
GUARD RIBS AND METHODS THEREFOR)
Serial No.: 09/767,627)
Filed: January 23, 2001) (Docket No. 6579-14)

Hartford, Connecticut, June 30, 2003

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

S I R:

In response to the Office Action mailed on April 14, 2003, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claim rejections in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-40 were pending upon filing the above-identified patent application. Claims 13 and 16-40 have been withdrawn as being drawn to a non-elected invention and species, and therefore claims 1-12, 14 and 15 currently remain for consideration.

The Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 17, 2002 according to the Examiner fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2) which requires a legible copy of each document. The Examiner states that the information referred to as (Wimmer Dieter, "Plastic Material Construction") therein has not been considered. Since after

a review of the article, it does not appear to be relevant, no further submission with regard to the IDS is believed to be necessary.

Claims 1-6, 9-12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Althaus (U.S. Pat. No. 5,447,084). The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Althaus is directed to a method for fixing protective strands to a razor head. The razor head is provided with a plastic body having an upper side that defines a surface for engaging the skin of the user, with the plastic body also having a front side and a back side. A razor blade unit is disposed in the plastic body. A series of strands are spaced along the length of the blade unit and are fixedly attached directly to the blade unit.

The Examiner in the Office Action of April 14, 2003 argues that Althaus discloses in Figures 1-7 "the invention including ... a series of guard ribs (11, 111 and 211)...". The "guard ribs" to which the Examiner refers to in Althaus are wire strands or wire wrap that extend over the blades and are secured thereto by means of spot welds. Independent claim 1 of the present invention, on the other hand, recites "a series of guard ribs integrally molded with said plastic body" of the razor blade cartridge. In other words, the guard ribs of the claimed invention are formed from the same material as the plastic body of the cartridge and are of a unitary construction with the plastic body. Thus the guard ribs as claimed are clearly distinguishable from the wire-type strands disclosed by Althaus.

For an anticipation to be appropriate, each and every limitation in a rejected claim must be disclosed in a single prior art reference used in the claim rejection. Because Althaus does not teach or suggest a series of guard ribs integrally molded with a plastic body of a razor cartridge as generally set forth in claim 1, it cannot be maintained that Althaus anticipates claim 1. Moreover, because claims 2-6, 9-12, 14 and 15 each ultimately depend from and thereby incorporate the limitations of claim 1, claims 2-6, 9-12, 14 and 15 are likewise deemed not anticipated by Althaus for at least the reasons set forth for claim 1.

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Althaus (U.S. Pat. No. 5,447,084) in view of King et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,625 B1). Claims 7 and 8 each ultimately depend from claim 1 and thereby include the limitations of claim 1. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

King is directed to a shaving implement, such as a disposable cartridge or razor, comprising a shaving head which includes a skin-contacting element in the form of a series of cavities and projections. The cavities are arranged so as to meter the amount of shaving cream which is on the surface being shaved.

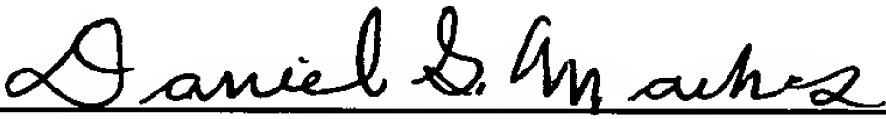
King does not teach or suggest a series of guard ribs integrally molded with a plastic body of a razor blade cartridge as generally set forth in claim 1 from which rejected claims 7 and 8 each ultimately depend. Accordingly, the teachings of Althaus and King taken either alone or in combination do not render claims 7 and 8 obvious.

Moreover, even if the teachings of Althaus and King were combined, a razor resulting therefrom would not arrive at the claimed invention. The resulting razor would include a razor cartridge having a skin-contacting element in the form of a series of cavities and projections, and further having wire strands or wire wrap extending over the blades and secured thereto by means of spot welds.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-12, 14 and 15 are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early action to that effect is earnestly solicited.

No fees or deficiencies in fees are believed to be owed. However, authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 13-0235 in the event any such fees are owed.

Respectfully submitted,

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